



Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

RFP # PCO-ENGAWD2013

Contract Management, Accounting and Fiscal Agent Services

March 1, 2013

KEY DATES	
ACTION	DATE
RFP Released	February 20, 2013
Amendment 0001	March 1, 2013
Live Q&A	March 8, 2013
Deadline for RFP Questions	March 13, 2013
Deadline for Proposals	March 20, 2013
Projected Award Date	March 29, 2013
Projected Start Date	April 1, 2013

Amendment 0001 Summary

1. Industry Day changed to Live Q&A throughout document.
2. Submission Deadlines updated to reflect that PCORI requires the solicitation number in the subject line for both questions and the proposal.

Opportunity Snapshot

The Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) was created to conduct research to provide information about the best available evidence to help patients, those who care for them, payers, policy makers and others make better informed decisions. PCORI's research is intended to give patients and their caregivers a better understanding of the prevention, treatment, and care options available and the science that supports those options.

Background

On October 27-28, 2012, PCORI invited 150 participants from across the country to a workshop titled *Transforming Patient Centered Research: Building Partnerships and Promising Models*. Three-quarters of the participants self-identified as patients, caregivers, or patient representatives, while the remaining 25 percent of the participants represented other stakeholder groups, many of them researchers. They met in Washington, DC to offer ideas on best practices in patient engagement in research and to envision a future culture of patient-centered research where research is conducted in partnership with patients, caregivers and the broader healthcare community.

Workshop participants shared, however, that ***few resources have been directed to patient, community or other stakeholder groups for capacity building, support or infrastructure development for engagement in research*** as partners and that the majority of funding for research has been allocated to scientific and academic entities.

One of the key recommendations that emerged from the workshop participants was the concept of research partnership development micro-contracts that would be available to individuals, consumer/patient organizations, clinicians and researchers that would address the aforementioned need for capacity building. Micro-contracts would not be intended for research, per se, however, the contracts are intended to enable consumer/patient organizations, clinicians and researchers to take a more proactive, informed role in partnering in the design of research and determining research priorities and projects. Micro-contracts could also help build a meaningful, sustainable research partnership infrastructure for patient-centered outcomes research (PCOR) as well as facilitate successful proposal submissions.

PCORI expects to award **a total of \$1.8 million dollars annually** to fund projects in three different categories—Pre-engagement/Community Building Projects, Partnership and Infrastructure Development Projects, and Proposal Development Projects—that follow a logic model and progressive “**framework for success**” for engagement in research.

Requests for Applications (RFAs) for all funding levels will be issued three (3) times per year and the total number of awards will depend upon the number and quality of applications received. Applicants may submit an application for one of the three funding categories at any one time. The micro-contracts program will “onboard” all levels of projects/funding in each funding cycle.

Purpose

Given the aforementioned background describing the Engagement Awards initiative, PCORI seeks an experienced Contractor to provide the necessary contract management, accounting, and fiscal agent services for a period of two (2) years, with options to continue work through 2019. Essentially, PCORI seeks to outsource these services to an independent, professional organization that can manage the issuance and compliant administration of the Engagement Awards, as defined in the following Request for Proposals (RFP).

The Patient Centered Research Outcomes Institute (hereafter referred to as "PCORI"), seeks an External Service Provider (the "Firm" or "Service Provider" or "Offeror") to assist the organization by providing the following services: contract management, contract administration, contract accounting, and fiscal agency services for a period of time beginning at the execution of the contract on or about April, 2013. It is contemplated that the contract will be a two year contract, with options for extension through 2019.

PCORI is distributing this Request for Proposal (RFP) for contract management, contract administration, contract accounting and fiscal agent services in connection with certain "MicroContracts" that PCORI will be executing for patient centered outcome research, (formally referred to as "Engagement Awards"). These contracts will be executed at not-to-exceed values of \$100,000, at an estimated annual award volume of \$1.8 million. The contracts are expected to be awarded in three tranches during a year, with approximately \$600,000 being awarded in each of the three funding cycles. The contracts are expected to have a life span of less than one year.

PCORI contemplates that these contracts will be executed with one of the following types of recipients:

- Qualified individuals
- Any private sector research organization, including any:
 - Non-profit organization, including patient, community, or advocacy organizations
 - For-profit organization
- Any public sector research organization, including any:
 - University or college
 - Hospital or healthcare system
 - Laboratory
 - Unit of state or local government

PCORI internal staffs and resources will be responsible for all activities performed on a pre-award basis. Specifically, that includes the identification and selection of contract recipients, as well as negotiation and execution of the formal contract agreements. PCORI contemplates that the Service Provider selected through this RFP process will be

responsible for all contract related management, administrative and financial activities that must occur after contract execution. PCORI resources will be responsible for the execution of the technical scope of work under these Engagement Awards. As such, PCORI scientists, program managers and Principal Investigators will be responsible for reviewing technical deliverables and determining whether Engagement Award recipients have achieved the contracted scope of work. The service provider must designate a Program Manager or other qualified individual to interface with designated PCORI Points of Contract in the PCORI Engagement and PCORI Finance Departments.

PCORI is seeking a services provider that will act as a fiscal agent and outsourced service provider on behalf of PCORI by performing all post-award administration, management, accounting, reporting and payment disbursement activities related to the Engagement Awards. The service provider must provide timely, reliable services related to these activities over the life of the awards. PCORI contemplates utilizing the services of the service provider through March 31, 2015, with options to extend the period of services through 2019.

It is contemplated that the Service Provider will not perform services on-site at PCORI, but rather, will perform services at their own location.

Funds Available, Budget, and Project Periods

PCORI intends to make one award to a single Contractor, but will consider other approaches, depending on Request for Proposal (RFP) responses received. PCORI seeks a Contractor to render services for a fixed price or fee, per month. This price should include any and all set up/transition costs. The Contractor shall include in its proposal fully loaded hourly rates for any additional services beyond what is described in this request in support of ad hoc requests from PCORI. Please refer to the Cost Proposal ("Step 3: Develop Your Proposal") of the RFP for additional details.

Project funding decisions will be based on the technical approach of the proposal and the Contractor's Management Approach. As a "Best Value" award, PCORI will weigh the Technical Proposal, Management Approach, and Past Performance of a given Offeror more heavily than the Cost Proposal. Please refer to "Step 4: Criteria" of this RFP for more information.

Responding organizations must provide:

- All expected expenditures and fees in their final bid.
- A pricing proposal that supports the entire Scope of Work outlined in the RFP and that lists key services with corresponding price quotes that are valid for at least one year from the project start date.

The performance period of this contract commences with the start date established in the Notice to Proceed.

Organizational Eligibility

Proposals may be submitted by any private sector organization, including non-profit and for-profit organizations. The Internal Revenue Service must recognize all US organizations.

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Contract Management, Accounting and Fiscal Agent Services

If you are interested in submitting a proposal, follow PCORI's five-step process.



1. **Review the Program Detail**

Examine all sections of the RFP and what makes PCORI's research different (<http://www.pcori.org/research-we-support/>).

2. **Consider the Requirements**

Consider the organization eligibility requirements and PCORI's specific requirements to see if your organization, your interests, and your capabilities fit this program. Note that PCORI plans to host a Live Q&A session on March 8, 2013. All potential Offerors may request to attend a presentation of the programmatic aspects of PCORI Engagement Awards, as well as the fiscal agent needs described in this RFP. Please refer to Step 2 of this RFP for more details about the planned session.

3. **Develop Your Solution**

Design your response to accomplish the Scope of Work, satisfy the expected deliverables on time, and provide services that demonstrate cost efficiency and ingenuity. Be sure to include a cost proposal that is clear and concise, along with justification for all direct and indirect costs.

4. **Know the Review Criteria**

Understand PCORI's evaluation factors and how they are weighted. Details are provided in this RFP.

5. **Submit Your Proposal**

Compile and submit your proposal. All proposals must be submitted no later than 5 p.m. (Eastern Time) on March 20, 2013.

Step 1: Review the Program Detail

Scope of Work

The Service Provider is expected to develop its own methodology, process, policies and systems for performing the required Scope of Work. Service Providers must have web-based, integrated fully automated systems, ***not*** spreadsheets.

The processes described herein represent the post-award functions that PCORI expects the Service Provider to perform under this award.

MicroContract Administration and System Setup

Prepare contract briefs identifying key MicroContract data, including:

- Period of Performance (POP)
- Dollar Value of each MicroContract Award
- Deliverables specified in each award with corresponding due dates
- Payment Terms with due dates
- Budgets (categories TBD)
- Awardee Points of Contact, including Authorized Reps
- Point of Contact for PCORI, Program Manager(s)
- Awardee Master File Information
- Awardee Payment Information

Establish Bank Account Protocol and Transfer Process with PCORI

- Fiscal Agent will disburse funds to recipient based on approved PO or invoice payment request. Funds will be drawn on PCORI Zero Balance Account.
- Fiscal Agent will prepare periodic bank reconciliations.

Establish Internal Controls, Procedures, and Report Formats

- The Fiscal Agent will develop a fiscal policy and procedure manual explaining the relevant processes, e.g., purchase order, invoice payment request, etc. for award recipients. This manual would be subject to review and approval by PCORI Finance and Compliance.

- Develop formats for weekly, monthly and annual financial and other reports for PCORI, including budget variances, outstanding obligations, bank reconciliations and notification procedures for project-to-date concerns.
- Develop processes and controls associated with contract administration, contract management, contract accounting, and P.O./invoice payment requests to cash disbursement processes.
- Provide periodic reports to PCORI; including but not limited to, contract obligations, contract spend to date, contract commitments, contract actual cost vs. budget reporting, contract deliverable tracking.
- Other ad hoc reports and deliverables as mutually agreed to by both parties.

Micro Contract Recipient Set Up for Payment

- Obtain payment information and desired means of disbursement to recipient, e.g., ACH or wire transfers.
- Obtain W-9, Employer Identification and/or Taxpayer Identification Information.
- Establish payment processes.
- Set up and maintain recipient master files.

Monitor Contract Recipient Spending Approve Payment Requests and Disburse Payments

The Service Provider will function as a fiscal agent for PCORI. In this capacity, Service Provider will be responsible for determining that recipients have submitted valid purchase order requests or invoice payment requests that agree with contract terms, and are aligned with budgeted funds. PCORI expects that the Service Provider will utilize a purchase order/requisitioning system that will be used by each Engagement Awardee to request payment under their award. The MicroContracts will be structured such that no advance payments will be awarded to recipients. Rather, as funds are disbursed by recipients, or as funds are required by recipients, payment requests will be initiated through a purchase order process or invoice payment request process. The Service Provider is expected to maintain an integrated electronic system with purchase order capabilities.

The Service Provider will perform the following:

- Review and approve purchase orders and invoice payment request for budget and project appropriateness ***prior*** to disbursing funds.

- Review request for payment against the budget previously approved by PCORI in order to determine if funds were, in fact, budgeted and the contract value has not been exceeded.
- Deny requests for payment if there is a (1) lack of funding, or (2) insufficient budget authority to purchase.
- Determine if payment is contingent on achievement of a contract deliverable, and if so, whether evidence of the deliverable being met exists **prior to payment**.
- Provide PCORI expenditure reports showing Project Costs Incurred within 10 days after the close of each month so that the expenses can be recognized in the PCORI general ledger.

Process Payment Request for Approved Disbursements

- Once a payment request or PO is approved, the Service Provider will make the payment directly to the Engagement Awardee, with funds being drawn against a PCORI Zero Balance Account.
- Track all disbursements in a Project Reporting Database.

Track and Report Payments to PCORI

- Track expenditures by Recipient, per contract.
- Prepare report of current period expenses, cumulative expenses, outstanding obligations, percentage of completion, and budget variance. A summary of all project costing is required each month, and a file for upload with the expense data will be transmitted to PCORI for regular journal entries.

Monitor Financial Progress

- Periodic Review of Budget vs. Actual data: per Awardee, per month, per Award Cycle, and per year.
- Review recipient cash expenditure reports to identify if there is a pattern of accelerated or delayed expenditures.
- Report significant expenditure findings to PCORI no less frequently than monthly.

Contract Administration and Contract Closeout

- Track contract values, modifications, and period of performance.

- Track deliverable status; ensure final deliverables are transmitted to PCORI.
- Prepare Final Expenditure Reports.
- Prepare a report to PCORI for completed, liquidated obligations.
- Process Final Payments.
- Inform PCORI regarding excess unspent funds.

Record Retention

- Maintain records throughout the life of this engagement, and for one year after final payment.
- Forward all records to PCORI at contract closeout.

Tax Reporting

- Back up tax withholding, as needed, depending on tax treaty (if entity is foreign).
- Prepare 1099s annually and transmit to each Engagement Awardee.

System Requirements

- Service Provider will maintain an integrated, web-based accounting system, a project cost accounting system, and a purchase order/requisition system, for purposes of this RFP.
- Service Provider will provide copies of specific journals, ledgers, income statements, balance sheets, project cost reports, and other financial statements and data upon PCORI's request.
- All records provided to Service Provider are considered the property of PCORI and must be made available to PCORI, upon request.
- Disbursements and reporting will be in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP).

Periodic Audits

- PCORI internal and/or external audit staffs will perform periodic audits of the Service Provider with respect to services rendered to PCORI, financial systems, and internal controls.
- Service Provider must cooperate to fullest extent possible and provide any and all programmatic and financial data, as soon as reasonably possible. PCORI will communicate all information requests with at least 30 days notice.

- Service Provider must remediate any material findings as a result of audit.

Help Desk Interface with Engagement Awardee Recipients

- Service Provider will be expected to respond to calls, emails, and inquiries from Engagement Awardees related to contract administration, management, accounting, project accounting, purchase orders, invoice payment requests, or other post-award matters.
- Service Provider will be expected to resolve all Engagement Awardee inquiries in a timely manner. Posted office hours are expected to be formalized with PCORI during contract negotiations.

Step 2: Consider the Requirements



Overview—Requirements for Providing a Contract Management, Accounting and Fiscal Agent Services

The Service Provider will directly manage the project; interface with key PCORI program staff members; ensure adherence to the approved budgets; meet established deadlines; ensure quality control; and provide any and all recommendations or process improvements in regular monthly reports to PCORI.

PCORI seeks a Service Provider that will perform all post-award management, administration, accounting, payment, and close-out activities for its Engagement Awards. PCORI expects that the Service Provider will use an integrated Purchase Order/Requisition System, Accounts Payable System, a Project Costing System, and have reporting capabilities to perform the Statement of Work for this RFP. The Service Provider will serve as PCORI's Fiscal Agent, in that they will approve invoice payment requests and disburse payments against a PCORI zero balance bank account (ZBA).

The Service Provider must have experience in post-award management, contract administration, accounting and reporting – as related to contracts. Federal or state grants experience may be substituted, dependent on the nature and scope of previous engagements.

The Service Provider must meet the following mandatory requirements:

- Demonstrated fiscal accountability and responsibility.
- Successful past performance on similar engagements. Plus, verifiable reputation as a respected provider of said services.
- Past experience working with nonprofit organizations.
- Ability to complete all deliverables and related services in the SoW, by the dates specified, and present data in the appropriate reporting format described in this RFP.
- Have sufficient financial resources to work on this engagement without any advance or down payments.
- Demonstrated record of delivering services on-time, within contracted budgets, and with work products of the highest quality standards.

- Ability to work with persons of all levels, educational backgrounds, and contracting experience with tact, courtesy, and professionalism. Note that many or most of the MicroContract recipients will have little or no prior contract recipient experience.
- Prior experience working with contracts and/or grants. Note that all of the Engagement Awards (MicroContracts) are contracts, as opposed to grants.
- Appropriate corporate and employee bonding for all financial transactions.
- At least \$1 million of General Liability insurance.

Program Management

The Contractor shall provide the strategic guidance, project management, personnel, equipment, technology and design necessary to assure that the highest quality service is provided on-schedule and within budget. The Contractor shall have the capability to provide a full-scale solution as described in this RFP and delivered within the time frame required. All Contractor personnel providing services under this contract shall be fluent in English and meet the following requirements. All key personnel shall be available to start on the contract start date.

Key Personnel

Senior Project Manager or Equivalent

The Contractor shall provide a Senior Project Manager (PM) who shall be responsible as the Point of Contact (POC) for PCORI. The PM shall have experience in the management of similar engagements and shall have adequate authority to make decisions for the timely resolution of problems. The PM shall coordinate closely and work collaboratively with the PCORI Engagement and PCORI Finance Departments. The qualifications of the PM include the proven ability to successfully manage complex contract projects; knowledge and understanding of GAAP and reporting requirements; and the ability to communicate to technical staff to manage issues and offer solutions. The PM shall possess a CPA, MBA, or equivalent credentials. This individual is also responsible for delivering the timely reports as described in the SoW of this RFP.

Other Staff/Subcontractors

The Contractor shall provide additional highly experienced staff, as needed, to develop and deliver the above-described services within the time frame and budget agreed upon and formalized in PCORI's Service Agreement. The Contractor shall propose how such staff will assist in the development, launch, reporting, and maintenance of the above-described services. The Contractor shall demonstrate its ability to support the services requested and provide a proposal that demonstrates an ability to effectively administer the SoW. The Contractor shall flow down all terms and conditions of the contract to any and all subcontractors.

Deliverables

PCORI is issuing this RFP for services. Accordingly, successful contract performance requires daily service delivery with standard reporting formats and frequency, as delineated in the aforementioned SoW. PCORI expects services to be a seamless, continuous operation that enables limited PCORI project staffs to effectively manage a project of this size and scope.

Any deliverables not specifically mentioned in the SoW and not related to the successful delivery of Contract Management, Accounting, and Fiscal Agent Services for PCORI's upcoming Engagement Award program, will be negotiated and mutually approved by PCORI and the selected Contractor.

The Contractor must consider electronic methods of communication of report information in order to minimize or eliminate unnecessary paperwork.

Place of Performance

The Contractor is required to provide its own facility for the services required hereunder. This function shall be staffed by the Contractor's personnel and located at its offices.

Hours of Service

It is expected that the Contractor will be available for project support, Monday through Friday, between 8:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. (Eastern Time). PCORI has regular observance of federal holidays: New Year's Day; Washington's Birthday; Memorial Day; Independence Day; Labor Day; Thanksgiving Day; and Christmas Day.

Type of Contract

It is expected that the contract executed will be Firm Fixed Price (FFP) with fully justified direct and indirect costs. Offerors must provide resumes, CVs, and other support documentation for the rates requested for key personnel and subcontractors. Likewise, all indirect rates and fees must be fully disclosed and supported with either government-issued documents (Indirect Cost Rate Agreements or Facilities & Administrative Rate Agreements) or independently-audited financial statements. Offerors have the option to propose innovative costing approaches that may include fixed monthly fees or a service fee (percentage) based on the level of MicroContract funding administered.

Please refer to the Cost Proposal (Step 3) of this RFP for additional details. Specific terms and conditions will be provided to the winning Offeror and follow PCORI's standard contracting format. All Contractors are required to execute Non-Disclosure Agreements (NDAs) and Conflict of Interest (COI) forms prior to final contract execution.

Insurance

The Contractor, at its own expense, shall provide and maintain at least \$1 million of General Liability insurance during the entire period of performance of this contract.

Contractor's Quality Control and Quality Assurance Surveillance Plan

The Contractor shall describe its procedures to monitor the quality of the provided services relative to the scope described herein with the goal of providing and maintaining the highest level of customer service and satisfaction. These procedures should include:

An internal method for monitoring, identifying, and correcting deficiencies in the quality of service furnished to PCORI and the Engagement Awardees.

Provide at least monthly management reports to PCORI, throughout the duration of the contract.

Quality Assurance Surveillance Plan

As expected in a performance-based contract, the Contractor will be required to perform at an acceptable level of quality in order to continue supporting the PCORI Engagement Award initiative. Should the Contractor be unable to meet the requirements, the contract may be canceled due to unsatisfactory performance. The following quality guidelines will be used to measure Contractor performance. These guidelines are subject to change, if it is in the best interest of PCORI.

Quality Performance Opportunity	Quality Level		
	Exceeds	Acceptable	Unacceptable
Engagement Awardee Support Services	Client leverages past experience administering similar engagements and provides customized services that exceed Awardee fiscal needs and expectations in a fully compliant manner	Client accurately provides timely services to the Engagement Awardee population	Client provides inaccurate and/or delayed services to the Engagement Awardee population, or fails to effectively service any segment of the aforementioned
Reporting	Client ascertains PCORI's needs; creates customized reports to provide accurate data; and ensures the successful interface of data to PCORI's financial and accounting systems	Client provides accurate and timely reports, as specified in the SoW and supports the successful interface of data to PCORI's financial and accounting systems	Client fails to provide accurate and timely reports, as specified in the SoW and/or fails to support the successful interface of data to PCORI's financial and accounting systems
Project Management	Client provides a full-time project management POC for continuous, supportive	Client dedicates a PM to work with PCORI, ensuring all time lines and deliverables are	Client fails to dedicate a PM to the PCORI engagement

	consultations with PCORI. The PM works with PCORI to understand needs; ascertain progress; and suggest innovations	met	
Deliverable Performance	Project deliverables and reports are accurate, complete, and submitted ahead of schedule	Project deliverables and reports are submitted on time	Project deliverables and reports are inaccurate and/or submitted behind schedule

Compliance

The Contractor is to comply with PCORI's Rules and Regulations (to be provided to awarded Contractor), all required forms, and any changes in procedures. Contractor will remain informed of any such changes and updates, as necessary, by the PCORI Procurement Office. Upon the request of employees or other persons with disabilities participating in official business, the Contractor must arrange necessary and reasonable accommodations for the impaired individuals per Section 508 Compliance.

Period of Performance

The expected period of performance is from April 1, 2013, until March 31, 2015 (two-year project period). The cost proposal should support the full 24 months of engagement, with an option to continue through 2019, if mutually agreed by both parties. Please provide fully loaded labor rates that are valid at least throughout the initial period of performance (March 2015).

Non-Disclosure Agreements

The Contractor shall not release any sensitive, confidential, or proprietary information, without prior written approval from PCORI. At the time of award, the Contractor will be required to sign an NDA that is incorporated into the PCORI Service Agreement.

Organizational Conflict of Interest

The Contractor, upon award, shall sign a statement confirming that it does not have and will prevent any organizational conflict of interest. If a conflict arises, the Contractor will immediately advise PCORI.

Live Q&A Session

Given the unique nature of this solicitation, it is PCORI's intent to host a live session, on March 8, 2013 at the PCORI headquarters in Washington, DC (or other local facility, if needed to accommodate RSVP'd attendees). The purpose of the event is threefold:

1. Present an overview of the background, strategic intent, and programmatic aspects of the PCORI Engagement Award initiative.

2. Overview the content of this RFP and elucidate aspects that may be unclear to a potential Offeror.
3. To provide an opportunity to engage in a formal Question & Answer dialogue with relevant PCORI staffs that will be made publically available in an amendment to the RFP.

Note that attendance at this event is not mandatory. Potential Offerors are encouraged to submit written questions prior to the conference. PCORI will accept oral questions during the conference and make a reasonable effort to provide answers at that time. Answers provided at Live Q&A are only intended for general direction and do not represent the PCORI's final position. Only written questions and official responses from PCORI are binding. Written questions will be accepted before, during, and up to the posted deadline for RFP questions (March 13, 2013) and formal responses will be posted on the PCORI website and distributed to all Offerors who submit a letter of intent; request the Q&A report; or submit a formal proposal. Any and all answers to written questions that are discussed during the Live Q&A will be posted and shared via the aforementioned channels.

Step 3: Develop Your Solution

3 Overview—Proposal Content

Your proposal should be organized into two separate volumes: Volume I to include the Technical Solution, Management Approach, and Past Performance and Volume II to include the Cost Proposal.

The Technical Solution, Management Approach, and Past Performance volume should be addressed in the first section of the proposal, which should be no longer than 10 pages. Additional detail—project team bios and so forth—may be included in the appendix (exclusive of the title page and table of contents) and sent via the acceptable formats noted in Step 5 of this RFP.

Volume I: Technical Solution, Management Approach, and Past Performance

Technical Solution

The Offeror shall demonstrate and describe its proposed solution, based on the requirements in the Statement of Work. Proposals should include the information outlined in this section; our ability to interpret and apply your proposal to these questions will factor into our funding decisions.

1. Describe in detail the firm's proposal to address the requirements outlined in this RFP.
 - a) Affirm that your firm has the ability to deliver each and every element of the SoW.
 - b) Explain the process you will follow to design and/or implement the necessary systems to carry out the fiscal agent duties.
 - c) Address important technology, software and other specifications used in your solution.
 - d) Provide a timeline for the stand up and roll out of the required fiscal agent services; direct support to the MicroContract community; and submission of the requisite reports.
2. Describe the project process and methodology, including sample deliverables from past projects of similar size and scope. Document examples of the firm's experience in designing/developing each of the project requirements.

Management Approach

1. The Offeror shall demonstrate the ability to effectively manage and control the operation through completion by demonstrating successful program support. The Offeror shall provide information about program management, financial resources or ability to obtain them, equipment and facilities, quality assurance approach, internal controls, and staffing. List the project team (including subcontractors) and short biographies of each team member. If using freelancers or outside resources, please indicate them as such. PCORI reserves the right to approve/disapprove of selected resources. Indicate how many full-time staff your firm employs.
2. Key personnel resumes should be no longer than two pages and are not included in the page count.
3. The qualifications of the PM include the proven ability to successfully manage similar projects; knowledge and understanding of sponsored project administration (grants and contracts); and the ability to accurately deliver services and adjust workflows to satisfy client needs. The PM shall possess outstanding communication abilities and will be the single POC for PCORI for any and all questions, issues, and collaboration. This individual is also responsible for delivering the timely reports as described in the SoW section of this RFP.

Past Performance

1. Provide a brief history and profile of the firm and its experience providing services for organizations similar to ours (i.e., other non-profits, funding organizations, research institutes, or think tanks).
2. Identify at least three previous or existing clients within the last five years with a similar effort in the commercial or federal market. Include client name, period (dates) of performance, the POC name/e-mail/phone number, and a synopsis of work performed.

Volume II: Cost Proposal

A Cost Proposal should be distinct and separate from the aforementioned narrative. It is strongly recommend that all Offerors separate the Cost Proposal and submit it as a separate file (Word, Excel, or pdf format). PCORI expects to make one award to a single Contractor but will consider more than one contractor, dependent on specific expertise. It is also expected that the contract will be Firm Fixed Price (FFP) with a not to exceed value. Although project funding decisions will be based on the technical approach of the proposal, responding organizations must include all expected expenditures and fees in their final bid.

Travel is not expected for the successful performance of this contract. However, Offerors may propose travel costs in support of the proposed Scope of Work that must receive prior approval and will be reimbursed, at cost. Organizations must provide a pricing proposal that supports the entire Scope of Work outlined in the RFP and that lists key personnel and key services with corresponding price quotes that are valid for at least two years from the project start date. If needed, a brief budget narrative (no more than two pages) may be included to clarify unusual budget items or calculations. The Cost Proposal does not count toward the page count limitation. Nevertheless, this section should also conform to PCORI's formatting requirements, as noted in this RFP.

Offerors should describe their fee structure and how PCORI will be charged. This must encompass all design, development, implementation, administration, reporting, and closeout. The proposal should categorize costs separately as direct or indirect. If an Offeror has proposed similar Cost Proposals for similar projects, then supporting detail regarding the similar projects should be provided to validate applicability and fair pricing. PCORI is willing to entertain innovative and efficient costing strategies; including, a fixed fee based on the volume of funds administered (\$1.8 million, per year), as well as fixed monthly fees supported by the salary rates and project hours to be contributed by each key personnel and subcontracted staff.

Step 4: Know the Review Criteria

4 Overview—Review Criteria

An award will be made to the Offeror who proposes the best value to PCORI. This RFP outlines a unique program and need for contract management, accounting, and fiscal agent services. Accordingly, an Offeror's Management Approach will be weighted most heavily.

How will the dedicated Program Manager, key personnel, and other project staffs operate to provide the best level of accurate services to PCORI and the Engagement Awardee population?

Next in ranking order, an Offeror's Past Performance will be evaluated in order to ascertain a relative probability of success with this solicitation.

Does the Offeror demonstrate successful administration of similar projects for similar clients?

The third-highest ranked review criterion is Technical Solution. It is expected that all Offerors will have systems and procedures that are compliant with GAAP and established US contracting practices. PCORI is not restricting eligibility to certain accounting systems, software, or reporting formats. Rather, it is expected that a successful Offeror will be well-versed, efficient, and able to provide excellent customer service with the systems and procedures that have delivered past project success.

Does the Offeror have the necessary systems, equipment, and procedures to deliver exceptional contract management, accounting, and fiscal agent services?

Finally, the Cost Proposal will be weighted below the aforementioned criteria. PCORI is prioritizing those proposals that excel in their Management Approach and Past Performance. Nevertheless, all Cost Proposals will be evaluated for reasonableness. All direct costs must have justification for the rate and project hours requested. Finally, all indirect rates are subject to independent verification through government-issued F&A agreements, independent audit reports, or financial statement analysis.

PCORI reserves the right to reject proposals that are unreasonably low or high in price. Price will be evaluated for cost realism. The price will be determined with regard to the fulfillment of the requirements based on Section 1, and compared to industry averages for like services. PCORI will determine the Offeror's acceptability by assessing the Offeror's compliance with the terms of the RFP. Please refer to the matrix on the following page for a synopsis of the weighting factors.

Matrix

Transaction Description	Weight of Rating Factor
Technical Solution	20%
Past Performance	30%
Management Approach	40%
Cost Proposal	10%

Evaluation Categories

Outstanding—The Offeror has demonstrated that there is a high probability of success in a combination of past results, low risk, and professional distribution of services.

Good—The Offeror has demonstrated that there is a good probability of success in a combination of past results, moderate risk, and professional distribution of services.

Fair—The Offeror has demonstrated that there is marginal probability of success in a combination of past results, marginal risk, and professional distribution of services.

Poor—The Offeror has not demonstrated that there is a probability of success in this services-based effort.

Best and Final Offers

Subsequent to receiving original proposals, PCORI reserves the right to notify all technically acceptable Offerors within the competitive range and to provide them an opportunity to submit written Best and Final Offers (BAFOs) at the designated date and time. BAFOs will be evaluated and considered at PCORI's discretion. After receipt of a BAFO, no discussions will be reopened unless PCORI determines that it is clearly in PCORI's best interest to do so (e.g., it is clear that information available at that time is inadequate to reasonably justify Contractor selection and award based on the BAFOs received). If discussions are reopened, PCORI will issue an additional request for BAFOs to all technically acceptable Offerors still within the competitive range.

At its discretion, PCORI reserves the right to also invite Offerors who are technically acceptable to conduct a presentation to PCORI on the proposed effort for technical and management approaches identified in the submission. PCORI will notify vendors who meet the qualifications and provide the date, time, and format for the presentation. PCORI expects to fund one proposal. However, PCORI reserves the right to fund more than one proposal or to fund no proposal if, in its judgment, an acceptable proposal is not identified.

Step 5: Submit Your Proposal



Overview—Summary of Instructions

Each proposal submitted must conform to the following instructions.

Format

All text should be Arial or Times New Roman font, no less than 11 points with one inch margins and single spaced. Graphics and tables are acceptable and encouraged; MS Word, MS Excel, or Adobe PDF formats. Proposals exceeding the 10-page limit (exclusive of the title page and table of contents) will not be considered.

The submitted proposal must explain in detail the approach that the designated team would take to complete this work. This could include, but is not limited to, an outline of the fiscal agent process, technical specifications, proposed work plan including a major project milestones time line and fee structure, firm profile and history, proposed plans to subcontract operational and support services for completion of work, as well as the specific tasks to be assigned exclusively to each team member. The proposal should also detail any service options and costs.

The submitted proposal must include a description of the composition of the project team, including key personnel and consultants. For each team member, include a resume that is no longer than two pages and is not included in the total page count.

Cover Letter

The cover letter must contain the following information:

- Offeror's name and mailing address
- Reference to the solicitation (RFP) number (PCO-ENGAWD2013)
- Technical and contract points of contact—name, phone number, and e-mail address
- Business size (Large, Small, State/Federal Certifications—MBE, 8(a), HUBZone, etc.)
- Dunn & Bradstreet Number (DUNS)
- Federal Tax ID (EIN, TIN, SS)
- Affirmation that the quote (cost proposal) is valid for at least 30 days
- A statement specifying the extent of agreement with all terms, conditions, and provisions included in the solicitation and agreement to furnish any or all items upon which prices are offered at the price set opposite each item
- Acknowledgement of any amendments by reference

Proposal

Ensure that your proposal contains the requisite two volumes (please refer to Section 3 that describes Volume I to include Technical Solution, Management Approach, and Past

Performance and Volume II to include Cost Proposal), conforms to the format and content instructions, and addresses the Scope of Work and all deliverables.

Submission Deadlines

- Questions should be addressed and submitted to rfp@pcori.org, referencing the RFP number in the subject line, NO LATER THAN 5 p.m. (Eastern Time) March 13, 2013. All written questions submitted prior to the deadline will be answered and posted on the PCORI website where this RFP is listed. Questions need to have the solicitation number in the Subject line of the e-mail.
- Closing date—All proposals should be sent NO LATER THAN 5 p.m. (Eastern Time) March 20, 2013, to rfp@pcori.org with the RFP number clearly listed in the subject line. The proposal needs to have the solicitation number in the Subject line of the e-mail.
- Anticipated notice of award date: March 29, 2013.

Late Submissions

Late proposals, requests for modification, or requests for withdrawal will not be considered, unless a late modification of a successful proposal makes terms more favorable for PCORI.

Retention of Proposals

All proposal documents will be the property of PCORI and retained by PCORI, and, therefore, will not be returned to the Offerors.

Withdrawal or Modification of Proposals

An Offeror may modify or withdraw its proposal upon written, electronic, or facsimile notice if received at the location designated in the solicitation for submission of proposals, but not later than the closing date and time for receipt of proposals.

About PCORI

The Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) is an independent organization created to help people make informed healthcare decisions and improve healthcare delivery. PCORI will commission research that is guided by patients, caregivers, and the broader healthcare community and will produce high integrity, evidence-based information.

PCORI is committed to transparency and a rigorous stakeholder-driven process that emphasizes patient engagement. PCORI will use a variety of forums and public comment periods to obtain public input throughout its work.

Our Mission

PCORI helps people make informed healthcare decisions and improves healthcare delivery and outcomes by producing and promoting high integrity, evidence-based information that comes from research guided by patients, caregivers, and the broader healthcare community.

Our History

PCORI was created by the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 as a non-profit, nongovernmental organization. PCORI's purpose, as defined by the law, is to help patients, clinicians, purchasers, and policy makers make better informed health decisions by "advancing the quality and relevance of evidence about how to prevent, diagnose, treat, monitor, and manage diseases, disorders, and other health conditions."

The statutory language defining PCORI is broad and authorizes research that will support a strong patient-centered orientation, inform better choices among alternative treatment and prevention strategies, and direct attention to individual and system differences that may influence strategies and outcomes. PCORI was designed to produce knowledge through the analysis and synthesis of existing research or the support of new research.